

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 117 OF THE COMMITTEE ON
ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

October 26, 2005

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it held a meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2005 at 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, at which the following were present:

Professor J. J. Berry Smith (In the Chair until
4:50 p.m.)
Professor Derek Allen, (In the Chair after
4:50 p.m.)
Professor Edith Hillan, Vice-Provost,
Academic
Professor David Farrar, Deputy Provost and
Vice-Provost, Students
Professor Rona Abramovitch
Mr. Navine K. Aggarwal
Professor Gage Averill
Professor Luc De Nil
Dr. Raisa B. Deber
Dr. Inez N. Elliston
Ms. Linda B. Gardner
Mr. Christopher Goode
Professor Ronald H. Kluger

Professor Ian R. McDonald
Professor Douglas McDougall
Ms Vera Melnyk
Professor Andrea Sass-Kortsak
Professor John Scherk
Professor Anthony Sinclair
Miss Maureen Somerville

Non-Voting Assessor:

Professor Susan Pfeiffer, Vice-Provost,
Graduate Education and Dean, School of
Graduate Studies

Secretariat:

Mr. Andrew Drummond, Secretary
Mr. Henry Mulhall

Regrets:

Professor Cheryl Regehr (Vice-Chair)
Mr. Blake Chapman
Professor Wayne K. Hindmarsh
Professor Linda McGillis Hall

Mr. Matto Mildenerger
Professor Janet Paterson
Mr. Andrew Pinto

In Attendance:

Ms. Yvette Ali, Director of Professional and International Programs, Woodsworth College
Ms. Nora Gillespie, Legal Counsel, Office of the Vice-President and Provost
Ms. Bonnie Goldberg, Assistant Dean, Faculty of Law and Chair, Academic Appeals Committee
Dr. Anthony Gray, Judicial Affairs Officer
Professor Susan Rappolt, Acting Chair, Occupational Therapy
Professor Patty Rigby, Graduate Coordinator, Occupational Therapy

ITEM 5 CONTAINS A RECOMMENDATION FOR GOVERNING COUNCIL APPROVAL. ITEM 6 CONTAINS A RECOMMENDATION FOR ACADEMIC BOARD APPROVAL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFIRMATION. ALL OTHER ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION.

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1. Welcome and Orientation

Professor Smith welcomed new and returning members to the Committee and asked all members to introduce themselves. In particular, he welcomed Professor Susan Pfeiffer, who had recently assumed the office of Vice-Provost, Graduate Education (in addition to her role as Dean of the School of Graduate Studies) and who would serve as a newly-appointed non-voting Assessor to the Committee.

He summarized the role and responsibilities of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, emphasizing that members, in carrying out their duties, represented the collectivity of the University and were therefore called to a high degree of responsibility in their deliberations. He further noted that although most proposals brought forward would likely pass, the role of the Committee was to provide strong oversight of proposals and not to act as a 'rubber stamp'. The Chair urged members to consult the 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) document distributed to members, which summarized the role of the Committee.

2. Calendar of Business

The Chair noted that the Calendar of Business was regularly updated by the Office of the Governing Council. He urged all members to consult it as matters arose.

3. Report of the Previous Meeting – June 14, 2005

Report 116 of June 14, 2005 was approved.

4. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

The Chair noted that the Report of the previous meeting would proceed to the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board for additional discussion.

There was no other business arising.

5. *Policy on Academic Appeals within Divisions: Proposed New Policy*

The Chair welcomed Ms. Bonnie Goldberg, Assistant Dean, Faculty of Law, and Chair, Academic Appeals Committee; Ms. Nora Gillespie, Legal Counsel, Office of the Vice-President and Provost, and Dr. Anthony Gray, Judicial Affairs Officer.

Professor Hillan informed the Committee that the current guidelines for divisional academic appeals had been in existence since 1977, and were designed to set minimum standards across the University while simultaneously allowing divisions the flexibility to suit regulations to local circumstances. A subcommittee of the Academic Appeals Committee had met to review the 1977 guidelines and to make recommendations. The subcommittee was broadly representative of the university community.

Ms. Goldberg stated that the current guidelines had been working well, but required reconsideration to determine whether they should be updated to reflect both new technologies as well as the University's renewed commitments to diversity, equity, accommodation and accessibility. The consultation process undertaken included an analysis of current practices across all three campuses, and the subcommittee had held eight meetings over five weeks, with every division providing a submission. The Principals and Deans had been consulted, a town hall for students had been held, and student leaders were consulted. Furthermore, the Office of the Ombudsperson, Chairs of the Academic Appeals Committee, and legal counsel were all consulted during the review process.

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5. Policy on Academic Appeals within Divisions: Proposed New Policy (cont'd.)

The subcommittee believed that it was important to reinforce the idea that a new policy would set minimum standards while allowing adaptation to local circumstances. In addition to the new policy, new Provostial guidelines would detail best practices and other recommendations for divisional standards.

During discussion, a member applauded the work of the subcommittee and noted that the framework for divisional appeals was a model of concision and common sense. Another member noted the helpful emphasis on communication and transparency, and asked if the terms 'diversity', 'equity' and 'accommodation' were defined. Ms. Goldberg responded that to provide definitions for these terms would be ineffective, since they were meant to be defined broadly as an opportunity to open dialogue, and should be considered and understood in the context of the University's other commitments. The member then asked why the Transitional Year Program (TYP) and Woodsworth College declined to meet with the subcommittee. Professor Abramovitch, the Director of TYP, responded that the TYP was such a small, transitional program that it did not fall into the purview of the subcommittee's process, and its contributions would not be meaningful. Although the TYP dealt with occasional petitions, it did not have any appeals. A member noted that all appeals at Woodsworth College were handled by the Faculty of Arts and Science, and that therefore, its response was unnecessary.

A member asked if it would be appropriate to implement changes as described in the checklist prior to September 1, 2006. Professor Hillan responded in the affirmative.

A member asked whether all divisions would be required to revise their processes in advance of the September 1, 2006 implementation. Professor Hillan noted that most divisions were currently conforming with the new policy and framework. Ms. Goldberg noted that the proposed policy delegated implementation of the proposed policy to the Office of the Provost. The member then asked whether accommodation for students was required if to do so would violate the standards of an accredited program. Ms. Goldberg noted that that was not the intention of the policy and framework. The member then asked, if a student used the academic appeals system to accuse an instructor of misconduct of some form, whether confidentiality would be maintained. Ms. Goldberg and Professor Hillan responded that the academic appeals system did not deal with cases of misconduct. A member noted that those responsible for appeals processes used common sense and wisdom in applying the current guidelines, and he expected them to continue to do so.

Professor Allen assumed the Chair.

A member asked whether it would be possible to have a document clarifying the differences between the existing guidelines and the new policy and framework, in order to assist those in the divisions responsible for implementing the new policy. Professor Hillan responded that the Office of the Provost would be running sessions to assist in the transition. Ms. Goldberg reminded members that most divisions were already compliant and did not need to change any of their practices.

A member, noting the excellence of the report, asked whether the requirement that medical evidence be provided dating from the same day was appropriate, given that some tests could still be valid several days following a sickness. Ms. Goldberg thanked the member for her suggestion, and stated that many student appellants frequently visited a physician after an appropriate date; it was far better as evidence to know that a physician could comment on the state of a student's health at the appropriate time, rather than *post facto*.

A member complimented Ms. Goldberg for her diligence in creating a thorough report and an excellent policy.

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5. Policy on Academic Appeals within Divisions: Proposed New Policy (cont'd.)

On motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED TO THE ACADEMIC BOARD

THAT the *Policy on Academic Appeals within Divisions* be approved, effective September 1, 2006; and

THAT the *Guidelines for Academic Appeals within Divisions* be rescinded, effective September 1, 2006.

6. Woodsworth College: Certificate Name Change

The Chair welcomed Professor Yvette Ali, Director of Professional and International Programs, Woodsworth College, to the meeting.

Professor Hillan noted that the change proposed was a minor one, designed to be more accurate and reflect currently accepted terminology in the field. Professor Ali noted that the new name would reflect the academic content of the program better than the old name, and that other universities were contemplating similar changes.

On motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED TO THE ACADEMIC BOARD

THAT the name of the Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) be changed to *Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)* effective September 1, 2006.

7. School of Graduate Studies: Proposal from the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to change admission requirements

The Chair welcomed Professor Susan Rappolt, Acting Chair, Occupational Therapy, and Professor Patty Rigby, Graduate Coordinator, Occupational Therapy, to the meeting.

Professor Hillan summarized the proposed changes, noting that they would allow a greater range of students to enter the Master of Science program than previously. Professor Rappolt noted that despite having a good program, the University was faced with the situation of a declining applicant pool. It had determined that entry averages in the currently required courses offered no correlation with exit averages in related courses, and thus, it was anticipated that the change would have no effect on outcomes, but would increase the number of possible applicants.

A member asked if there were any implications for accreditation reviews. The response was in the negative. A member asked if the Department intended to monitor the implementation of the change and determine whether it would have any effects. Professor Rigby responded in the affirmative.

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7. School of Graduate Studies: Proposal from the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to change admission requirements (cont'd.)

On motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

THAT the admission requirement for the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy Program, that each student must have completed 2.5 credits of prerequisite courses in psychology, physiology, statistics, sociology, human growth and development in their undergraduate study, be removed, effective September 1, 2006.

8. Report on Summer Executive Authority Decisions

The Acting Chair reported for the record that no decisions were made under summer executive authority under the terms of reference for the Committee in 2005.

9. Items for Information

- (a) School of Graduate Studies: Proposal for a Collaborative Program in Aboriginal Health
- (b) Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering: Self-Initiated Minor Programs

The above-noted items were presented for information. There was no discussion.

10. Reports of the Administrative Assessors

Professor Hillan reported that her Office was beginning the process to review the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, and additional information would be provided to the Committee as the process developed.

Professor Pfeiffer reported that the implementation of the recommendations of the Graduate Education Task Force had begun. The Task Force had four principal recommendations:

- 1) to strengthen the Dean's role by creating the role of Vice-Provost, Graduate Education and integrating strategic planning exercises with those of the Provost's office;
- 2) to establish a coordinating committee;
- 3) to align governance functions to reflect the various responsibilities of different divisions and offices; and
- 4) to assess the appropriate responsibilities of the School of Graduate Studies and other divisions.

As members were aware, the Governing Council had created the position of Vice-Provost, Graduate Education in June, 2005 and had appointed Professor Pfeiffer to fill that role. In addition, a graduate education coordinating committee had been created and had been meeting on a regular basis. Members could expect forthcoming initiatives. Lastly, Professor Pfeiffer had formed two working groups, dealing with governance and administration of graduate education, with the aim of simplifying processes while maintaining quality and accountability. Changes to governance would come forward to the Committee at a future date.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair informed members that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, December 7, 2005 at 4:10 p.m.

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12. Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Secretary

November 4, 2005

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Chair